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EXAMINER	
BASOM, BLAINE T	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2173	

DATE MAILED: 10/19/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/607,374	CHAVEZ ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Blaine Basom	2173	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *11 August 2005*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *40-59* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *40-59* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *30 June 2000* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

This Office action is responsive to the Request for Continued Examination (RCE) filed under 37 CFR §1.53(d) for the instant application on 7/28/2005. The Applicants have properly set forth the RCE, which has been entered into the application, and an examination on the merits follows herewith.

Response to Arguments

The Examiner acknowledges the Applicants' amendments to claims 40 and 50. The Applicants argue that Hickman (U.S. Patent No. 5,361,361 to Hickman et al.), presented in the previous Office Action, fails to teach a unified taxonomy structure having a predefined and static first level of categories, as recited in each of these claims. In response, the Examiner presents the U.S. Patent of Banning (U.S. Patent No. 6,380,957), which as shown below, teaches such a unified taxonomy structure. The Applicants' arguments have thus been considered, but are moot in view of the following new grounds of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 40, 45-48, 50, and 55-58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,361,361, which is attributed to Hickman et al. (and hereafter referred to as "Hickman"), and also over U.S. Patent No. 6,380,957, which is attributed to Banning. In general, Hickman discloses a method for providing concurrent access to hierarchical help provided by multiple independent applications (see column 1, lines 24-53). Such hierarchical help is specifically organized into categories, topics, and sub-topics (see column 2, lines 11-14). As applications generally involve a plurality of hardware components of a computer system, such as the memory and input devices, it is interpreted that the help information for the application programs includes help topics relating to not only software components of the applications, but also hardware components required by the applications. For example, installation of an application involves the memory of the computer system, and various input commands to the application similarly involve an input component, like a mouse or keyboard. Moreover, Hickman discloses that such a method is implemented on a computer, via a computer-readable medium (see column 2, line 60 – column 3, line 40; and column 7, lines 14-19). It is therefore understood that Hickman presents a computer and computer-readable medium having computer-executable components for execution on a computer for presenting a plurality of help topics for software and hardware components installed on the computer.

Specifically regarding claims 40 and 50, Hickman discloses that the computer system implementing the above-described method comprises multiple independent applications, each application having a set of help files (see column 4, lines 20-29). It is understood that the applications are stored in the memory of the computer, as is known in the art. Consequently, such a computer memory storing the applications, and thus the help files of the applications, is considered a help content store for storing help contents for a plurality of help topics, the help content store having a plurality of separate vendor folders, i.e. files, which correspond to different vendors of software and hardware components installed on the computer, each vendor folder containing help contents of respective help topics provided by a corresponding vendor. Continuing further, Hickman discloses that each application also comprises a help file directory, which is used to map the help topics associated with the help files into a "hierarchical and integrated listing of help file topics from multiple applications" (see column 4, lines 30-51). This hierarchical and integrated listing is considered a "unified taxonomy structure," like that of the present invention, as it is common to and inclusive of the help topics provided by the different vendors (for example, see figure 5, and its associated description in column 5, line 49 – column 6, line 66). As the levels of topics within the hierarchical and integrated listing are defined by the help file directories of the various applications (see column 4, lines 30-51), each of the levels of categories within the hierarchical and integrated listing, including the first level, is predefined. The help file directories particularly include data for identifying the position of each topic or sub-topic within the hierarchical and integrated listing, and also, data for identifying the location of the help content associated with each help topic, the help content being stored in the help files described above (see column 4, line 52 – column 5, line 27). This

conglomeration of help file directories associated with the applications stored on the computer system thus provides a help database, like that of the claimed invention, comprising mapping data for mapping help topics into a unified taxonomy structure being common to and inclusive of the help topics provided by the different vendors, whereby a first level of categories in the unified taxonomy structure is predefined, and whereby the mapping data includes data for each help topic for identifying a node position of each help topic in the taxonomy structure and a location of corresponding help content in a help content store. Continuing on, Hickman discloses that a help utility may automatically recognize the installation of new applications and include help information topics from the newly installed applications into the above-described hierarchical outline structure (see column 2, lines 19-25). Such a help utility is therefore considered a help content update module for updating help contents received in the content store and the mapping data in the help database based on update packets, i.e. applications or new versions of applications, which are received from vendors. Lastly, Hickman discloses that the above-described help utility is also used to display the hierarchical outline structure of help topics to a user (see column 6, lines 4-36), and also, is used to retrieve and display help content associated with each help topic in response to user-selection of the help topic displayed in the outline structure (see column 6, lines 37-66). This help utility is consequently considered a help application for providing a user interface for presenting help topics to a user, the help application being programmed to interactively display a unified taxonomy structure using mapping data in a help database and help contents stored in a content store, including displaying help categories and help topics in the unified taxonomy structure in response to user selections, retrieving help contents of a user-selected help topic, and displaying the help content of the user-selected help

topic. Accordingly, Hickman presents a computer-readable medium like that of claim 40, and a computer like that of claim 50, for presenting a unified taxonomy structure having a predefined first level of categories. As demonstrated by figures 4A, 4B, and 5, the help topics presented within the unified taxonomy structure are organized according to the application to which they are associated. That is, the help topics for each application are presented together, with the first level of help topics within the unified taxonomy structure comprising the major help topics of each application. Consequently, the first level of categories within the unified taxonomy structure of Hickman is not static, as required by claims 40 and 50, since adding or removing an application (and its help files) would result in the addition or removal of help topics from the first level.

Nevertheless, organizing application files in a taxonomy structure, with a predefined and static first level of categories, is well-known in the art. For example, Banning presents such a taxonomy structure, designated by reference number 12 in figures 1A-1D and reference number 104 in figures 4A-4C. As demonstrated by Banning, this taxonomy structure organizes the applications of the user's computer into a hierarchical organization of files and folders. The first level of the taxonomy structure, comprising "desktop" or "network" directories, is predefined.

As described above, the help topics presented within the unified taxonomy structure of Hickman are organized according to the application to which they are associated. Having a large amount of applications would result in a large first level of help topics. It would have therefore been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Hickman and Banning before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the unified taxonomy structure taught by Hickman to include additional levels, including a static first level, to organize the plurality of

applications, as done by Banning and described above. It would have been advantageous to one of ordinary skill to utilize such a combination because the application files, being organized hierarchically, would be easier to find, as is demonstrated by Banning.

Concerning claims 45 and 55, Hickman discloses that that a help utility may automatically recognize the installation of new applications, and as described in the previous paragraph, include help information topics from the newly installed applications into the above-described hierarchical and integrated listing by updating the help directories. As described above, such a help utility is considered a help content update module, like that of the claimed invention. It is understood that a user may similarly remove applications, as is known in the art. Since the help directories specify the help topics for applications *installed* on the computer system, it is interpreted that removing an application would remove a directory for that application. Consequently, the help database, which as described above is the conglomeration of such directories, would be updated. Thus it is understood that the help content update module of Hickman is programmed to add, move, and remove help topics from the hierarchical and integrated listing by updating the mapping data in the help database.

With respect to claims 46 and 56, Hickman discloses that a user may perform a search for a particular help topic or set of help topics (see column 6, line 67 – column 7, line 13). In particular, the above-described help directories are searched to find topics that match user-specified search criteria (see column 8, lines 26-43). The help directories, which as described above are considered a help database, thus comprise data specifying a search keyword associated with each help topic, the search keyword being the name of the help topic.

As per claims 47-48 and 57-58, Hickman discloses that the above-described help file directories, which are considered a help database, comprise a topic descriptor field (see column 4, lines 61-65). This descriptor field contains an alphanumeric string that specifies the help file content for a particular topic or sub-topic within help files, and which is capable of being displayed to the user (see column 4, line 65 – column 5, line 2). In other words, it is interpreted that this descriptor field comprises the name of each topic or sub-topic. Consequently, this descriptor field is used to specify an index string, i.e. name, associated with each help topic. Hickman further discloses that a menu selection button may be selected in order to display the hierarchical and integrated listing of topic and sub-topic names (see column 5, line 49 – column 6, line 36). Thus the user interface provided by the help application of Hickman includes an interface element presenting an option to view index strings of help topics.

Claims 44, 49, 54, and 59 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Hickman and Banning, which is described above, and also over U.S. Patent No. 6,236,989, which is attributed to Mandyam et al. (and hereafter referred to as "Mandyam"). As described above, Hickman and Banning present a computer-readable medium and computer like that of claims 40 and 50, respectively. In particular, Hickman discloses a help file directory, which as described above, contains mapping data for mapping help topics into a unified taxonomy structure of help categories and help topics. It is interpreted that the structure of the directory implicitly denotes the parent node of each help topic in the taxonomy structure. For example, referring to the directories of figures 4A and 4B and the associated hierarchical structure of figure 5, the topics and sub-topics in the hierarchical structure are displayed in the

same order as listed in the directories. Consequently in the directories of Hickman, the parent of a sub-topic is specified by the first topic preceding the sub-topic. In other words, the mapping data for each topic implicitly includes a parent ID identifying a parent node of the topic in the unified taxonomy structure. Continuing on, Hickman further discloses that the help file directory includes a file identifier field, which defines the location of the help file corresponding to each help topic (see column 5, lines 2-6). Neither Hickman nor Banning, however, explicitly specify that this file identifier field comprises a URL, as expressed in each of claims 44 and 54, or that the help contents in the help files are written in a mark-up language, as is specified in each of claims 49 and 59.

Like Hickman, Mandyam discloses a method for providing help information for a software application residing on a computer. More specifically, and regarding the claimed invention, Mandyam discloses that the help information may be migrated to HTML and stored on a web server, from which it may be accessed by specifying a URL associated with the content (see column 6, lines 24-34, and column 2, lines 44-50).

Consequently, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the method of Hickman and Banning such that the help files are accessed from a web server, as is done by Mandyam. In other words, it would have been obvious to modify Hickman such that the file identifier field comprises a URL which specifies the location of the help contents associated with each help topic, the help contents being written in HTML, as is taught by Mandyam. One would have been motivated to create such a combination because storing help files on a web server consumes less space on the user's computer, as is taught by Mandyam (see column 6, lines 24-29).

Claims 41-43 and 51-53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Hickman and Banning, which is described above, and also over U.S. Patent No. 5,825,356, which is attributed to Habib et al. (and hereafter referred to as "Habib"). As shown above, Hickman and Banning teach a computer-readable medium and computer, like that recited in claims 40 and 50, which are for providing help information. Neither Hickman nor Banning, however, teach that such help information includes a script library for storing a plurality of script library objects used by the help contents stored in the help content store, as is expressed in each of claims 41 and 51.

Like Hickman, Habib presents a method for providing help information to a user, wherein this help information is organized into various topics and is presented on the user's computer (see column 3, lines 44-51). Habib additionally discloses that the presentation of help information includes displaying a "do-it-all" button, which when selected, causes the computer to execute a script in order to complete a task regarding a selected help topic (see column 1, lines 57-60, and column 4, line 57 – column 6, line 3). Such scripts are particularly maintained in a script library referred to as a "catalog file" (see column 13, lines 41-67). Consequently, like recited in claims 41 and 51, Habib presents a script library for storing a plurality of script library objects used by the help contents.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Hickman, Banning, and Habib before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the help system taught by Hickman and Banning such it includes buttons with similar functionality to the "do-it-all" buttons described above and by Habib. It would have been

advantageous to one of ordinary skill to utilize such a combination because "do-it-all" buttons provide a faster means of fixing a problem than that of manually fixing the problem, as is expressed by Habib (see column 4, lines 15-19).

Regarding claims 42, 43, 52, and 53, since particular sets of scripts are associated with specific help contents, as is expressed above, it is interpreted that with the above-described combination of Hickman, Banning, and Habib, there exists some sort of store which is checked to identify which scripts to execute for particular help content. Habib particularly discloses that, for the help content to access a script, the help content must know the name of the script (see column 13, lines 41-65, particularly lines 49-52). Consequently, each help topic is considered to necessarily comprise storage for storing information, specifically the names of required scripts, which identifies that the help content associated with the topic is authorized to access such scripts. The help application checks these script names to determine what scripts the help content is allowed to access. Such storage storing these script names is therefore considered an "authorization store," like that described in claims 42, 43, 52, and 53.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Blaine Basom whose telephone number is (571) 272-4044. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Cabeca can be reached on (571) 272-4048. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

btb

RAYMOND J. BAYERL
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